

BEATITUDE *least*

50¢



Having relegated the earth's grass to cactus-burnt hemp
drying in a cobweb of afternoons and feathers,
she relaxed her fingers
not quite managing to break the five silver fish
hanging on the little chain of the sun.

Only the skin of her white face
was stretched
over the lantern.
But that was enough
as the paper
and bamboo
broke,
and the circles of bamboo
became a scythe
removing the balconies
from the days
removing the people
from the quadrangles.

If I have seen you balanced
on the stalks of lilies like stilts
in a slow moving torrent of locusts
which eat at the poles in vain

if I have seen you kneeling
at the edge of the beach of space,
refusing the moon's mouth,
because it does not contain any hive of honey
like the hive in your fingers and books

if I have felt your hand
separate the clouds of mammoth
and lay in mine a cornucopia of tulips
that will not be there
when the lobsters come
for their final banquet of grass

if I have seen you balanced
on the stalks of lilies like stilts,
then I wish to know why
your sheets are filled with thorns
when you go to them so gently
and wrap them about your legs at night.

With the mourning of wood,
a subtle cascade
that lined the caskets
in coppered leather
and fastened the lids
with leather nails;
with a sighing of wood
the grain was entered
and leather knitted
faster than frost.

The grain was entered
exposing a morning
holding minutes of flowers
caught on their spools
and the grain was bitten
with handfuls of quills
composing their signs
on leather skirts.
With the morning of wood
the morning closed
and the grain's clock emptied;
the roses stopped ticking,
pulled in their petals.

Not sandstone and holly
or the promises contained in its leave
of thereby splitting the grains
and watching the emergence
of glass
as the bouldered halves
fall away,
but a marriage of glass and glass,
a marriage
of cummings and Klee.

To write a white letter on the religion of your scarf
(written with silk and pressed grapes)
I took the far corner
from a beach of dust
and filled in the cribs
where I once had eyes.

Why we move into the onyx
twisting night's white stone bridges--
why we drink the strange late snows
sealing thirst beneath their caverns--
why we carry silver quills
to whip our mares of mist and winter--
is a lost
delinquent secret.

Diane 7
DIANE WAKOSKI: Seven poems

If Madness is Loving Too Much

Harriet Smith, a girl I know,
floats through the world like a marshmallow
floating on hot chocolate.
She plays Beethoven as well as anyone I've heard
and thinks heaven must be a place
where cookies and punch are served
after piano recitals given by the best
pupils of god.

She told me one day that her mother's insane
and lives in an asylum thirty miles away.
I think she is mad too, if madness is loving too much.
But each week she visits the state mental place
and sees her mother alone in a room,
not recognizing her daughter at all
and scratching her knee until it bleeds
while the girl tries to drift gaily on,
talking of god, and that awful electronic music,
and, especially, of love.

She will dress this Sunday as usual
and go again to try to tell her mad mother about love
and probably about the punch and cookies served by god;
her mother's hand will be wrapped
to keep it from offending the knee any more;
and at the end of the hour,
the girl who plays Beethoven as well as anyone
I know, will float out like a marshmallow
that has slightly melted in her mother's cup
of very hot chocolate.

A Lecture
--after John Cage

!

Wedding at the Lizard's

The bride was admiring her red body in the stream,
She rolled
her bulging eyes
like glistening cooked grain
and caught glimpses of each scaled
side.

"How fine a bride I shall make,"
she said.

II
Mushroom Story

A spider was standing
on the very fine pleats of a poisonous mushroom.
"There are more dangers
than birds,"
she decided.

III
Parable

A barefooted girl
stepped on a daisy and didn't even
hear it sigh.

IV
Vision

Beauty is relative.
So is danger.
and often our offenses are committed without knowing
we have done wrong.

The Few Silver Scales

The feeling comes,
the critics say, spontaneously. A gull
sweeping to the water, grabbing food, and skill,
not contrived, but gracing
the dipping wings.

I know
what they say; have never
found it so.
How stiff my wings extend,
creaking like a boat
moored,
rocking in the waves.
And how
the morsel slips away
into the water,
sliding fish -- only a few silver scales in my beak
after I dive to catch it.

The feeling comes,
lurching me, and I must grab it
as best I can.
How lucky I feel
with a few silver scales
dripping from my beak.

There Was a Time

There was a time when horses' hooves frightened me
pounding down the valley,
giving only ribbons of silence to tie the mind.
I could not see the mask
for all the sound,
stripping with wind and thunder the iron enclosures
from my face,
my feelings,
the accoutrements of mind,

I would chase the wind
up and down the valley, motioning sideways
to catch the sound,
to forget pounding horses' hooves while remembering them
and
their echoing.
I could not forget them
and my mother wept
over the sound of the wind.

But there is no growing beyond the lonely
sounds that strip your mind,
cast your face in iron,
pound motion into your motionless
mind,
I am away,
but it does not matter.

I will always be running,
my hair flying against my face,
chasing the wind.

"yes," cries the wind, "yes,"
sweeping down the valley,
sweeping down with lily stalks
in its hands.

"yes," touching my face,
rushing down the valley,
pounding horses' hooves. . .

"yes,
yes," cries the wind
and winds around a tree to die.

There was a time when horses' hooves
were more than wind pounding in my valley.

And This is the Way the World Ends:
Never

There are ten fence posts
holding up a fence which leads
nowhere
and
on each post there is sitting a green-bird,
airing his green.
Here I come,
the destructive child,
with my glass hammer, looking
for something to strike.

Why not a green-
bird, suggests the little hammer,
beginning to sing
sharply
with the thrill of destruction.

So,
along we go,
tapping a green-bird off each post
with a glass hammer.

Well, I said to my glass hammer,
you can kill the birds
but what about the green?
Doesn't it ring in your ear
like bells in the wind?
Can you ever forget the green?

But already the hammer is my hand
was beginning to ring,
its glass body quivering in hopes of something to strike --
giving my knuckles tiny glass taps of reproach
for being still so long.
And the quiver of the hammer
and the guilt of my fingers,
green with commitment, balanced together
in the humoring air.
Taking another look at the world
I see

there are ten fence posts
holding up a fence which leads
nowhere
and
on each post I have just noticed a green-bird
sitting.

Dark Windows

The windows of my house are dark,
for a hawk has spread his wings over them.
I am frightened of the dark
and step out the door.

On to my gloved arm, I lift the hawk,
gently folding his outspread wings,
touching his feathers, soft as wind.
His body, feather-packed and tense with hooded fright,
makes only minute connection with my own --
his talons as separate metal hooks touching
what they must to hold, but yielding nothing
of the rust-deathered body.

I unveil the bird,
though the windows of my house are still dark.
He sits in tense immobility
and then

as sudden as a gust of wind,
he pecks out my eyes like two cherries.
I am blind,

the windows of my house forever dark. My arm
does not flinch from the rigid bird
gripping its leather branch
and again,

again,
he furiously darts at me, taking pieces of flesh,
stinging chunks in his scissored beak
from my face,

my neck,
my uncovered white arm. Then, his fury spent,
and the smell of blood soothing his microscopic strained nerves,
I feel the weight of soft feathers released against
my covered arm
and nestle against my bleeding face.

Quiet is the wind.

The windows of my house
may be always dark,
but inside there is light enough for any man
to meet his own
needs.

Love Poem

Tree, where are your fingers?

They are dead.

Tree, where is the summer?

It has gone mad, chasing the sun.

Tree, who is the girl

with fingers like twigs?

She is dead.

I cannot understand her hands.

They are like twigs; and the sun,

it has died in her hair.

I love her, and she is dead.

Tree, why are you trembling?

From her hands like twigs

and the dead sun in her hair.

I killed her, Tree:

I killed her.

The twigs scratched, and the sun is like
the dead bodies of bees twisted in her hair,

Tree, where are your fingers?

In her hands and on her hair.

CARLOS CORTEZ: three poems

Eulogy

Old house
Gray in your years
Your paint has long gone
And nothing hides
Your noble wood
But now that you have
Grown a soul
Nobody wants you.

October

Falling from the trees
The ride with the October
Wind
In all directions

Caressing
The grey city streets

Napa Night Bit

Starlit sky
Windows of heaven
Holding communion
With
Windows of the valley
Like notes of music.

Beneath the
Mountains dark shadows
Barking dogs
And
Singing frogs
Jam it with
A distant sprinkler
Thru the
Napa night.

HOWARD ANT: five poems

Bird With Red, Beady Eyes

A bird with red, beady eyes,
a bird with a banshee wail,
a bird with wings stiff-folded however long you watch them,
slithers in past my fingers,
settles itself into the tip of my vision,
and walls the night away, and the day,
and sleep is a rotten crab-shell crumbling in its claws,
and waking is damp roots with leaves rotting on them,
and suddenly you and all I love on this planet
are small animals scurrying as fast as they can,
fixed in the long funnel of those red eyes,
chasing outward and outward,
tugging that cold wail behind them.

That Jungle, That Crazy Zoo

It is an old stubbornness,
It is a monkey hanging on my arms, weighting them, so that to reach
for you, even slightly, takes will and muscle,
It is starfish-fingers sucking my eyelids closed, it is cobwebs thickening
in my mouth, it is a big green snake snapping my ankles together.
If at times I see you in ropes of shadow only, hear you a whispering from
ocean-bottoms, if my feet tangle in their climbing toward you,
See me at those times clothed in my thousand ghosts, see me a black
stick-figure sketched against the moon, pulling at a dark bell,
Say: "It's not him, it's that jungle, that crazy zoo he carries in his
twisty fingers and behind his eyebrows."

Too Many Wobbly Moons

Too many wobbly moons, scraping in mid-passage,
have boomed above the scrunch of their barnacles;
"We are Howard Ant's personal sandpaper.
It is our job to take his fingers down to the bone.
He will be a fine safe-cracker when we're done with him.
There will be no lock he can't bust open,
just by twisting it a few times,
He will hear all tumblers as they fall into place
against the stubs of his fingers."

No Common Dream

Fretful, sick of drab aches,
their lousy, sure marching,
the slob-wantings of others
juggling in my ribs
like clickety marbles,
like coal lamps on an old stove grating,
loose and floppy all over,
never taking hold, never deepening
to any root, any sucking brightness,
I cry: "Throw me no common dream,
Throw me flowers from a witch's windowbox,
beasts to make a zoologist vomit,
Throw me what's hot and painful and unsure of itself,
what can't be fingered like stacked plums
or scooped with a spoon,
Throw me enough ooze, enough fuzzy matchheads,
to ignite all that's green or damp with morning."

Somewhere's a Centre

Somewhere's a centre a man can sink to
where nothing's inward, where all that's turbulent
swims seaward, a thousand leaping salmon.
Somewhere's a bottom a man can drop to
where the flash and roar of the hours,
the loud, mountainy creaking and heaving
and the whole porridge of joy and anguish
shrink to the stillness cave-flowers know.
Somewhere's a quiet a man can stop at
where nothing moves but his blood moves with it,
where nothing whispers but his own tongue trembles,
and everything that beats becomes a heart.

PETER STEVENS: poem

on the subway
a nameless man
with a forgotten face
reading
"the lonely crowd"

REE DRAGONETTE: six poems

Salamanders

We are coves confined in fire,
salamanders without legend
after sumite seas;
each one hovering,
an inlet,
unwound island.
Overt strand
points you headland
from my hand.

Far from Iasilli
your waters,
less than sapphire
is my sky.

Mangos, split by evening, fall,
dissentangle
one by one.
Brittle links,
they break our hold.
Solitary stem is cold.
Severed fruit gives bitter rind
down below the taste of sun.

We are trovers of long night,
treasure bladed,
narrow green,
never to be coined with love.

Secret mangrove,
you are grown
past my open
fan of palms.

Carib shadows without aims
separate us leaf from root,
part the heart of you
from me.

We are coves in covered fire,
salamanders lost at sea.

This is a Lovely Locust Leaf

This is a lovely locust leaf:
single, but more, a small repeat
of one-in-one as it descends
on viable design, to die.

Crux, veins, calibre suspend
or fall, at end-on-end,
out of your fingers on my palm.

This is a time particular
with pods, oblate in severance,
that offers fruit
of mode, sweet unit unconstrained.

This is a gifted circumstance.
Our segment bind, our keep
of fine catalysis,
to stand the elemental change.

This is the only once we hold,
in factors fragile and at odds,
by stress and sum of hyper-truth,
against the coming up of truth.

This is a leaf to fly, or fasten on,
or bend, through insect carnival,
the beach and seal of universe.
To catch to -- so to catenate
the far, free parsons after stars.

Dwarf from its dark, round integer:
this is a higher gift than most.
Leaf at its taper, fanned to light
under your fingers at my lip--
this is a lovely way to end.

Ancient Oil Lamp

We live on focal floors,
unlit by any truth.
On zero inclination
climb our ceilings' ciphered essence,
Bare and sightless,
scar through uncommitted, chromium despair.

Sodium inside and out,
we feel the stimulus of vapor
and hold still just long enough
to tranquilize our lying eyes
against the black infusions of the night.

With meat radiance,
we fuse all revelation smooth and flat
beneath aluminum compression
dimly wise.
Should some imperative of knowledge
dare to rise
or shine upon our pallid, contour twilight--
we must hide at automatic doors,
or hang upon the wired case of mobiles,
magnetized.

If once we should remember to lie down,
displacing rubber reason,
we might see
the double glassed-in vision of a cave
and feel the ancient, clay encirclement
beneath our senses,
torn upon extremes that cry for unction,

We might learn
that once we had slow midnights made to burn
the searching oil of peace,
when olive branches
flowered in the head.

Not Green or Sun

Your laughter will not light the woods with Spring,
Its flags, like fireflies, fall to somber night,
Nor do your words avail. The year, despite
your warmth, has died to snow. You will not bring
that love which left my limbs, as branches bled
of all their bird-swift use are left, to lie
on brown, leaf darkness. From the rocks we tread,
no less an icy ruin cheats the eye.

/stanza break

Because your gaze is shelter for my grief--
your hands are open valleys where I lean.
They bear me peace, but not one golden sheaf
of love or season lost. You are not green
or sun, but in your touch and laughter start
bright thaws, that break with joy my winter heart.

Only the Fair Inherit Early
(for c. v. j.)

See granite through, see down,
With quartzite and with quince, analogize,
If feldspar decompose,
another rose
conceives its mordant mica
into pinks,
To common and uncommon earths
full cycles come,
though how they till is meager to your mind,
which maps the fleck
(ily on iris trace) of tiger's paw,
and marks how blue sky gardens black
under the bittern's plumage.

Hurons cry,
Death has enough of eyes
to dagger blood
and scallop out the groin
before its sight,
As well for us we know
what toothed leaf cuts off marigold,
scant margin for the figs and damson
near our lips' unyielded hunger.

Dry, we have burned our vision dry
upon a hawk-stone shimmer.
Nothing stays,
This, known, is learned again.
Time takes its bureon
short of truth,
Shorn thallus, tender of its lack,
will mine the waves
to search where all things lived.
Now rootless from their roots,
the fishes his,
dorsal with sun
bite, breathing at your bone.

There are the growing rocks,
wind-wild and hollowed in,
there is the veined, stone silence,
Night in night's double cavern breaks,
feather through auricle.
You move with fins.
Silent, an earth's magenta stings the sea
as you are delved by fishes.

Rare as you are
bones breathe in diamond sight
of tigers.
Heron cry.
iron in their black wing walk.
Feathered, all light slips damask
down the plum,
pawed by a dust rock tooth.

Quince trees shiver,
sting in their fruit-flesh
bled to rose.
Fall, as all mica shimmers under earth,
As earth, divisible,
furrows its burning crystals
through the sea.

Dorsal with sun,
breathe ocean down.
Only the rare
are rayed in quartz rock's kingdom,
only the fair inherit early.

Small Elegy

October has a double face,
sun skull
a mask of leaves
to hide knife glow
behind its autumn eye.

Blue wind tracks
stream
transposing light,
to shield with haze
the spokes of sky.

Through summer maze
the stone heart learns.

October wheels your burning ray--
white hub of breath
which cleaves the mind--
on sickle year
round winter spine.

To mist and daze
the stone heart hangs.

October took you far and cold;
the cycle folds
to burn you back.

The stone heart burns
on double death.

October has no memory.

august 1958

the morning is
october in august
a stiff girl eating a hero
breaks off a crumb
to a coward pigeon

the sun feels so good
that a girl among children
pokes an upturned sparrow
with a long
gnarled stick

almost all of me

almost all of me perfect
in new greens incipient reality
becoming one in every individual
as my lights dance in every range
receiving the story each image gives

lovers flowers and thieves make their own faces
they reach into the form and feeling I assume
as his is the face that faces
oh money on self on woman on god
in fact and mind and memory

as latin girls like bright partying flowers
in spring sunday before sundown
happen in streets between cavernous buildings
and where water lilies grow
laughter and slight conversation are things
as there are deeper flowers we dont see
and which are sure to come

after a long summer of love

after a long summer of love
in wintertime to him
delilahs crying make the tree stars
burst in blue
against twilight of no song

after afternoons summer
minds out of grace in the field of winter
awkward elbows into love
confronted with mentality and muted wool
become an asthmatic prayer on piano keys

The Way I Want To
(for Tom Postell)

Let me swing into life the way I want to
A beggar squats, blind, in a doorway, asking for alms
In gothic, modern, and storefront, the godly continue their lying
And nobody else will be saved
But the damned get high to find perfect repose
And a wine bottle lies in the corner of a cloud.
So many tragedies have gone down time unnoticed like breathing
Like flies, lives feed on what we don't clean, don't touch and leave behind
And everything happens the way it must, because . . .
I'll swing in my life, my death, the way I want to.

as soft day in june

as soft day in june
distant children breathless voices
resemble the afternoon, since it is at dusk
earth and every city is most unearthly.
for this is the time the world secretly knows
disclosures of its tardy age
in silence -- pulse and memory.
immortals like suffering and hatred create new faces
as centuries come, incurring rebirth
vice petty and profound is our immense inheritance
and is our legacy of confused desire.
first few leaves springtime
are finished now
one filling scent of famished love.

ANONYMOUS: graffiti

The signs of life are found on restroom walls
in senseless scrawls
that, being variously read, create
emotions nothing holy
wholly dares to desecrate.

AWA

EWA

earth-mouth-fire
man-mouth-fire
tooth
out of the river-mouth
eye
as sun to sun
suns held the leopard
long before the cow
knew what was happening
when the lion roars
is no need to run

KANDIMBOANG

13 birds turn
rope is iron
14 split his wing
became king

KENTAH-KEYAN

tall
make rain-mark
hollow eyes man
like beak of bird inside

KUDUO

sleep the doubled
hypnotic eye
shut and open

eyes that peer
below the bear
beware

WAREGA

swords as windmill
swords as horn
beaks to make the turtle turn
the night-heron ogre waits
2 crocodiles
3 crocodiles
5 upon the wooden gate

BAKONGO

the snake is striking
the turtle has no more shell
the bird has seen its egg

that bird

his father-duty done
returns to his
euphoria tree

BARANGUE

sprung from the forehead
brooding beak
casting its shadow
ahead

KIBBI

if a vulture rides a horse
a snake will flower shrine
and chameleons will climb

5 tongues to twist
the weary tales
to hear
is to die laughing

BASUKU

BAKOTA

a pair of birds
upon the head
make light & fleet
beneath their feet

BENIN

all animals man
the mask gives eyes
to the back of the head

YORUBA

and let no blue
strike two
no mark bear more
than it was given

DOGON

as bone
is bone
as wood
is fire
where bent knees
where tied wrists
eyes are knives

SENUFO

the house-ghosts speak
antelope woman
arrowed to the wind
keen to its whistle
burn wind
horns through the savannah

GURO

king queen warrior
in the game
when the hyena dies
none will eat him
male & female
3 yet 1
male & female
1 yet 2
1 monkey hold the vessel
to be filled

I wait for my rider
as you wait for your key
dividing key
holds after-secret
the sealed mouth
as feather & sword
so mouth & seal
what will fill my bowl?
what will fill my fate?

look deep
look deep
as waters speak
rich clay rich mud
old moon
new flame

the snake told the lizard
to meet him
at the tadpole
the turtle told the monkey
and the monkey told another
and out of the tadpole
came man

tear
sun
laugh
eye
tear

TELLUM

OVERHEARD: coffeeshop talk

"People wouldn't need dirty minds if they had better imaginations."
"Suicide is just an exaggerated form of self-criticism."
"He couldn't be original, so he became perfect instead."
"She's had lots of experience, but none of it was hers."
"We all talk like bedsprings creaking."
"You're probably very interesting, but you lose something in translation."

"He wanted to be a Don Juan, but somehow it always came out Don Quixote."

"He bought a dog so that he could get a girl. You know how these things work. But it turned out that he was making a choice instead."

"How can I tell if it's beautiful until I know who likes it?"

"My tragedy is that I wrote a poem full of private allusions, and everybody understood it."

"He always meant what he said, once he'd said it."

CAROL BERGE: ten poems

geodes

concealed, intrepid as caves, sometimes limestone
might become a geode of delight, each one might
contain caves of crisply clarified history
distilled to crystals in finesse, heat-skinned,
sealed and hidden in layer on agate layer,
to identify needs external. desert's a stranger,
molten sunglaze desert makes no thunder-eggs
since no rain falls, an alp has other statements,
lives, gift-wrapped as geodes, are confidence:
some view geodes as meteors, oddly flameless,
others interpret agate as forest wood aged,
those made of mountain fabric identify mountain,
the virtue of careful existence is fragility
preserved internally: almost a clairvoyance,
on finding lode stratum it takes delicacy,
keen senses, tools of existence in hand
to challenge exterior without smashing
exquisite minarets immaculate for zones.
in proper hands, crystals glow touchstones,
mallet-tap is gentle, chisel benevolent:
hidden lives wait churchlike for discovery,
covered by cities, common in open counties
near mountains, touchmap! and crystals fan
bright as smiles of shy satyrs, found.

at big sur

downcenter into your eye
swimming past the green
into the well of black
i catch a glimpse of you
something beautiful there
glinting moving as if seen
through water through sun
where the shade leaf falls

since these days

since these days
we are fashionable
and die of an agony
in parts most found
world open and alert
i will be found
with eyes open
and sheaf of poems
through the heart

third day in a strange city

may i slobber over you
i havent spoken to anyone for three days
and am irrevocably lonely
from lack of communication

could i do you think
sit at table which is your eyes
a brief time
just long enough to regain my perspective

just long enough for some sustenance
you see i left my doctor at home
my child is in another country
my parents just left on a ship

my brother is married to someone else
and so is my oncebeloved husband
my friends all talk to each other
but they are in another city

there are too many hills here dont you think
tell me something about your young times
your cabins or shells or music
anything you choose

matins

in behind your eyes
under the coffee
laying over your hand
i see you anyhow

why do you put me down
i see you anyhow
see your fine eyes
watch your legs move

can i help reaching
when you move away
when you turn your back
you know too much

your scratchy chin
is still your chin for me
bring it here man
give me a morning kiss

i sleep with morning cat
the walking one is my cat
climb to topmountain

i wake with noon cat
the climbing one is my cat
reach to topmountain

i rest with night cat
the curling one is my cat
house topmountain

you

i make a bouquet of you
faces of my beautiful friends
jagged red petals of agony
i gather in my bloody hands
and hold it to the white sun
to show it how to burn

the women again

women, then, don't wear some things:
angry faces on their wrists, on tiny
jewelled bones of jewellike wrists.
they turn in their seasons like suns,
like rusted ferrous jewels, unused
to the motions of their angular men.
having novels written about them,
women conceive of conceiving, then
in a kind of angular retaliation
or dedication, some of their fantasy
becomes children, which are novelty.
they shine and spawn crystal faces,
hours sunfull, clearcut as sundials.

for ken ford

with regret i decline
your gift to me of
three roads of yours
at the same time
i observe with interest
you in your hard cocoon
mentioning your life
to some favored few
with a certain dignity
i also see that your track
as you move along
leaves a trail of blood
with delight i report
i have no three roads
only one which serves
with thanks i donate
the possibility of roads
other than yours

love in guanajuato

you predatory spider walk to me
across the rose-color recamara
you and wind and the night clean
your eyes jets of light
brighter than naked bulb
more naked than bodies
your long legs thin tender cilia
fine black hair cilia of a joy
the town concentrated in you
the hills of the town
and you bears daring
to try my hills here
all our differences faceshine
across the rose-room we stare
bearing the murmur of years
you lunge the roomlength
with a crisp lava love
i see your eyes lava
rivers of lava in a rose room
in the moonperched rose-room
perched in our dark mountains

TAKASHI KUSANO: two poems

damn!
(I am sorry)
you all american
cities women men
your blank blue
eyes have
quite upside-downed
me

? I?
laugh when
Enya Hangan
slices his
(beautifully)
stomach for
bad manners and
his
147 i retainers
weep and swear
(saps!)
vengeance vengeance vengeance

No moon, no stars,
My footsteps walk without me on the streets,

Their sound is terrible,

because no wind blows,
because there are no leaves
to move, to fall

poised to fall,
know is waiting, I
must join my footsteps,

There is no place
I am not homesick for.

CARL JANSEN: poem

That was the day the big bass man
found chords,
Mother Christ! he hit 3 strings at once
and all the lights went on like God
discovered in a carnal act: and

3 chicks stroked their pony tails,
a sailor yawned,
the bass broke out like I IV V,
3 sailors stroked a chick,
a pony tail did what pony tails have always done,
the bass discovered I VI II
and all the lights went out again.

JOHN RICHARDSON: two cycles

A Cycle for the Streets

i.

Disconsolately I walk
Along these exiling streets --
The sheol of my birth. Talk
Surrounds me: Orcus repeats
Itself in swirls of laughter.
As I, made nude, loud fingers
Probed my silent soul -- after --
The secrets of the singers?
And yet, alone, the moment
Weighs upon me, seems to grow
Into a lived stonement
For a long, long pride of 'no.'
Invisible, earth contrives
Various allurements, and I balk,
I yield not, and through ogives
Of self-depriving silence
Disconsolately I walk.

ii.

'If ought of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaotic Eve. . . !' of

'Now am I minded to take up the pipe' --

O hell! Shall I, scarce boulevardier,
Wandering the blind streets in a blinding way,
The returned vision forcing itself through song,
Unsay in deaf defeat the Eros-soul,
The burning arrows in the quivering hand
That psyche, going-down, shall take at last?
And yet this girl, unhearing, nods me on
To no song, and irreverent designs
Exclude me from the heaven of her arms,
O Doctors, saints & scholars munition!
How shall I, streeted, taverned, driven mad
By some old book, recover from the dark
Some subtle handful, hard, of hidden light!

iii.

"Whoever shee may bee,
That not impossible shee,
Shall have my heart and mee!"

Through many hours, years and cities, streets
Inclined through darkness to the nether end
Of chaos, walking, dreaming, in complete
Obcurity, dearth of being, to descend
Alone into abysses of pure mind.
I've walked with a dark questioning, to end
Perplexities in the arms of a sweet girl,
Whiteness to whiteness nighly, and to find
A never-ending unity in this swirl
Of all things in the capitol of the sun,
When the banners of heaven shall unfurl
To accept my rising and oblivion,

iv.

"Whether those things which do not exist are more
God-like than those things which do exist?"

Delicate rain of an indelicate season
Impressing impermanent images on the wetness
Of mirroring streets, where the reflections of people
Mimicing each the jeweled refraction of the other;
Multifaceted, O youth, white and golden, imperishable --
Aureole of the implacable return, the most commonplace,
Yet the unique, the one in the many made new --
The existent manifold, the non-existent
Promised, yet such purity beyond any mere man --
The word an encompassing circle, and not of light,
No center there where the far constellations dissolve,
No God out there pondering his own creation --

Only the footsteps of people, and laughter of couples
Here, in the delicate rain.

v.

"You must not mind the cost,
Terrible and sublime,
The world possessed and lost,
The loss of sacred time.

"The babbling of the soul
Makes one sound in the ear
Of earth, and the whole
Of the mighty dead shall hear

The turning of those leaves
Upon which shall inscribe
A silent heart that grieves,
The great myths of the tribe,

And in that single sound,
One, from the one begun,
The stars shall know the ground,
The holy earth the sun,

Four Poems of the City and the Night
after Wolfgang Borchert

i. In Hamburg

In Hamburg the night
is not as in other cities
a gentle blue woman.
in Hamburg she is gray
and keeps with those who do not pray
watch in the rain.

In Hamburg the night stays
in all the harbor taverns
and bears her robes lightly,
she brings together, frightens, and creeps away,
when by the narrow banks
there is love and laughter.

In Hamburg the night cannot
murmur sweet melodies
with nightingale-like tunes,
she knows that the song of the ships' horns
that growl out of the harbor toward the city
pleases us well enough.

ii. The Grayredgreen Song
of the City

Red mouths, that glow out of the gray shadows
coo a sweet deceit,
And the moon grins goldengreen
through the clusters of fog.

Gray streets, red roofs,
within, sometimes, a green light.
Stormwards rolls a late drunkard
with a distorted face.

Gray stones and red blood -
in the early morning all is good.
In the morning a green leaf drops
over a gray city.

III. The City

The goddess city has spit us out
into this empty sea of stone,
when we have sucked in her breath
then she leaves us alone.

The great whore city has seduced us all -
in her yielding and destroying arms
we are all undone by song and joy
and want no pity.

The mother city is kind and good to us -
and if we are empty and tired,
she takes us into her gray womb -
and eternally organs over us the wind.

IV. The Night

And again the darkblue woman passes by,
the pale sister of all drunks and poets,
through the silent, fog-encumbered streets.

As usual, the same old nightlamps flicker,
the young girls, who are holy at this hour,
glow sinfully through the houses' shadows,

until frightened by the morning winds.
Streetlamps feel themselves embraced
by despairing and intoxicated revellers -

still the poet whispers his great monologue:
take us, darkblue woman, you without cares,
into your most gracious womb,

"About Borchert: May 1921 - November 1947. Was primarily a prose writer of great potentiality - wd. undoubtedly have become one of Germany's major writers had he lived. His play Draussen vor der Tür is a first-rate drama & the film made therefrom - Liebe '47 - should still be of interest to intelligent & concerned people. I don't know whether it has ever been exhibited in America."

John Richardson

13.

when a merchant ship
of heavy ammunition
goes down to greet
the sea
a war breaks out
between the seachippies
and anemones

14.

the ocean banks
and dives:
green waste
the constant
culmination
of our haste

15.

the seagirls
bred their happiness
and were complete
before our eyes
first turned in
toward the land

16.

men drown in seas
as flies
in effervescence:
unwondering

17.

a snar
upon the ocean
glitters;
marking perhaps
where a great beast
floundered

18.

the sea
a moneychanger
for the clouds
or crowds
makes right
enormous wrongs
and yet
is prophetless

19.

from the beach
i throw
a gentle word
to seabirds
as they fold
their wings
and fall

21.

the crystal
sea shell mouths
are glazed
and tagged for sale;
when listened to
give only lies
to tourists

The Consumption of the Wall

Evening eats its way leisurely into the wall of the catholic school
behind the window of my apartment.

At first the inroads of its shadow mouth are almost indiscernible,
but then when the soft jaw pinks and trout

pinks smear the bricks-- the bricks amazingly assume the pinkness
of that rosy sunset. I think . . . if I were to interject

myself in those dark worlds . . . if there were a power to cease the
spread of night . . . I think mightily of the etching of the

sulphur red into the body of that catholic school wall . . . and as I
think . . . night comes, and I am unconscious.

1.

the
rain across
the
face of our
opponent-
his surprise
at the thrust-
to be
wounded thus
by a birds pack.
the rain
sweeping across
the defeated
mountain.

End of Summer

all knowledge is revealed to me this end of summer,
torches blaze from castle walls. moors
shed their blanco white robes and walk barefoot over
the sands. lizards become unafraid of
flies and do not consume them. rivers traverse a
natural course backwards and the fish sun
themselves on the rocks. the sick and the maimed re-
nounce illness and become snowflakes.
cities melt at eal back into the earth. children grow
up and become children. the orange breast
of the robin is the message that the buddha speaks.
laughter is proclaimed beneficent, and
summer becomes summer.

BILL BUTLER: Seattle Night: Morning

Seattle is the animal that feeds at night
Its hunger at a mark-down price;
Shabby goods: yesterday's wares in stores
Are streetwalkers ready for re-use or
A sale table spread for all
And on it all are served:
Themselves for food.

(In all-night grocery stores there is no fresh bread.)

The sale ends at dawn:
The trash is emptied into trucks of dawn,
The pigeons waddle in the streets of dawn,
Bakery trucks are loaded with fresh bread;
The sign in alleys reads:
"Closed until tonight,
I've gone to sleep."

SUSAN HOROWITZ: Chinese Nightmare

Suddenly, everyone in Jersey City
became Chinese: the bus drivers,
the people on the buses (even those just passing through
Jersey City on the way to anywhere else),
the traffic cops, the people in the cars,
priests in the tall Catholic churches, in the small
backstreet Catholic churches, those devout
at 8 a.m. weekday Mass -- all Chinese.

Everyone was shocked. Some few
were heard to utter unkind racial epithets
until they saw their mirrors.
Some died of shock (a few --
people in Jersey City are equal to shocks).
A few -- the smallest few -- called City Hall
to find out reasons, find a cause, a cure.

The majority, the heart of Jersey City,
followed the lead of one undamned priest
who, though he saw his Chinese Christ-in-wood,
finished saying his Mass and went home to eat.

Gift

standing on the
suburban platform,
parsing the
Wall Street Journal,
Mr. Brooks
in his brother's suit
fingers
his Jasper pin
and curses
softly
when a
proletarian pigeon
drops
a gratuity
on his
father's
hat.

Snake-Eye
(for Edward Dahlberg)

Old Snake-Eye, the phallic look,
slowly rose and closed the book.
Le chapitre told the tale
of Moby, the great white whale.

Moby is no common name,
unlike Dick, well known to fame.
Melville concealed by every trick
his pursuit of the great white Dick.

Safari

Stalking the bow-legged beast
with slingshot and bellyful of aggies,
we proceed through the dockweed forest.

As we approach the pinnacle,
a porcupine's arse
appears in the distance.

Under these circumstances
the polite thing is to say,
"Thank you. It was such a lovely party."

GEORGE STANLEY: three poems

Viceroy: a Revised Sonnet

Sang's silent of song, sun's spurs
gleamed on Viceroy at night.
Nonetheless dispiritedly again I fight
resolutions with Miss Resolves - here
and here's. \$ rings up. The old coin reregisters.
Then spectacled in the wicket, she and I
duel with one knife and slash the sky.
A voice not hers in hero-silence stirs.

"I'm lost somewhere between
the librarian and the pirate. The swirls
I haltingly trace in fortuitous pearls
uncold the conch- the bean
clanker in Caribbean- anchor dirt.
The scorched- and island Catholic's shirt.

Punishment

1

Language has no face, only hair--
on the brown skull like the word Africa--
honey-vinegar-mustard color--
The wild American pig in the reeds
white circles of echo bleats.
A monkey, answering makes
mocha mistakes. The pith-
helmeted hunter hears--
Nueva York in his pearl-handled ears.
Natives charm the future with their knuckles.
Successive passes lure the quarry in
as no intense love cartridged and triggered.
The safari is at one of its clear rings.
Light later than the sun
burnishes the lower leaves
of snake trees like a Tarnheim.

2

Unrolling in their thin dark skin like snails on their tails
your eyes glazed yellowishly on this lake--
reflected winter sunlight facetting
the flex and leather of a rider on a narrow
legend in the mind-- the snow there bright and near,
resisting the imprint of the horse, as he is riding,
drifting-- And the snow is the legend,
Bright and near,
bright and far, the snowy mountains in the lake--
the mirror where the telephone is ringing.

Uptown the ten-car train plunges into the lake
 with a kiss of steam, in car by car it darkens (I take
 the "D" to 59th, the 7th Ave. Express) a his-
 s an amber light (if he is right) this
 he secretly reads) the red
 lights on the local
 pinkened in the tunnel to dull reflectors
 are dark as garnet-in-the-rough on the trestle
 at 125th St. -- And the flanged
 wheel strikes sun's
 sparks from the rails-- in sparks
 of light, sparks of ice fly--
 in ice, mist-- and dark where the stars shine
 like signals in the tunnel-- In local windows--
 the man with a lantern and a pickaxe's seen--
 In the brightwork the polishing rag fails to brighten
 corroded oxides of copper and zinc
 island in the luster-streaked friezes
 of the crewmen, the signed, striped-
 skirted and shanghaied-- The man
 with a lantern and a pickaxe's seen for-
 wardships of the fur-throated British passengers--
 In the bright-
 work the mottled brighter
 streaks are the lighted
 cabins, and a dark line the line of the bow--
 and a paleness in the brass the arching ice
 where reflected phantasms strike
 at the actual radiant expressions.

The Message Held Up to the Speeding Train
 on a Willow Hoop

The whistling ranger withdraws into reunion,
 Without a word he walks away
 into that grove of trees,
 his suaded jacket and their leaves
 one sunlight dissolving.
 I feared the light of dusk
 when I believed in the sun as I would believe
 in someone's mind. Yet still,
 though I do not fear it, it is at that time
 that I exchange uncertain facts with my friends.
 Mountains-to-be-climbed are mentioned, and snow
 glistens in our eyes when we talk of them,
 their snow. The sun is older,
 its trembling, reward-pointing rays,
 than the one point of light I dreamed
 silently moving in fog
 (Yet still at six I turn on
 the crystal chandelier,
 the yellow lantern-light,
 the deep red lights upheld

by Rebecca and Jacob)
 awakened me distantly....
 Outlined in dawn,
 a shadow, against it gleaming,
 I fish on a string.

RICHARD BARKER: six poems

Last Summer

Beneath the locust tree
prowled our only offspring
the obese Cat adventuring
into honeysuckle thickets
ripe with birds. Even
the cicadas listened.

We burned a Christmas candle
all that summer, remember?
You cried your disappointment
under the locust tree
at the very moment Cat
leaped for a moth on the face of the moon
and missed.

I Love You Now, Ruth Frye

I remember the fifth grade, Ruth Frye,
and the gangling girl who played clarinet
with eyes full of wonder and grief
the girl too plain for the whole fifth grade
who must be a beautiful woman now
and who through all these years is still
the perfect silent love
across a fifth grade aisle.

I remember Eddy Caine and Tommy Irwin
beat me up whenever they wanted to,
I remember Miss Stegmaier
our fifth grade teacher
mothering Tommy.
I still hate
the bastard principal
who brought my ruined childhood
crashing on my head again
and I remember
more than anything else
the silent compassion of Ruth Frye's lovely eyes.

Chants Gregorian, Fluted Columns;
Afternoon in a Medieval Museum

All their women were pregnant, their men had swords,
Chants Gregorian, fluted columns.

All day the troubadour tried to comfort her,
All day she turned away. A dozen fountains listen,

Now boys intrude, drown the fountains;
The afternoon lies broken on the stones.

Bell rings, a heavy door closes,
Who is this with the angry face?

Birds flee. C'est fermé, fini.
Angelus: descent.

Air for a Broken Lute

Piere Vidal was homeless by design
chose the long road
braved the night with steel
howled down his age and became a wolf
we waste

Old Vidal sang
Where is our song?
They lied to us

They've changed the face of the house I lived in
cold dawn is always several hours away
the lovely girl will never return

The children grow old and wrinkled in their beds
their prayers unanswered
What to tell them?

How explain
this man in the next cell
is not quite right in the head?

* * *

The city caught fire in a moment
the child became a star-burst
at the burning breast
and the old man with pleasure was warm again
as he turned to flame and went out

Voices in the night
and running
the blow the fall
the sleep that ends it (flame)

The hand denies the arm
eyes reach belief shatters
bleeding hands
 bits
 pain

Happy Birthday, Eddy

He crawled from his howling red-haired infant mother
in a Wyoming blizzard some four years ago today. She
refused to nurse him.

His father flipped a year later,
cut up the cat with a hatchet, painted the walls with the pieces,
and spattered Eddy's blankets with blood.

His second birthday was almost without omens.
They sheltered under a viaduct, out of the rain,
ate pan-fish grilled on rusty chicken-wire.

Last year he lived with his grandparents,
who ignored him. His mother
was following the army again.

Today, as he opens his fifth gray year,
Eddy's only retaliation is to cry
"I don't like you any more."

The crime? The crime is this:
that the petals of Eddy's young soul will
never unfold,
and the fingers of his mind will be
forever clenched in a fist.

SOME NOTES ABOUT BEATITUDE/east:

We have no ax to grind. Poetry and prose written in
any style or according to any theory will be accepted by us,
as long as it's at least fairly good. This magazine's main
virtue is its eclecticism.

However, no manuscripts will be returned. The filing
problems become too involved. Stamped & addressed postal
cards (or even picture post cards, as a matter of fact) should
be enclosed with manuscripts.

Poets in the New York area are invited to visit us at
78 East 10th Street, New York 3. Poets away from New York
are also invited to visit, if they can afford the trip.

In re: the prose we're going to start carrying in the
next issue: there have been set up no editorial requirements.
Novels, though, and long plays will not fit into the limited
space we have available.

But the Beatitude Press, Inc., publishers of this
magazine, are interested in manuscripts of all sorts, though
again not excessively long.

Now that we're a corporation, &c., and have resources,
we expect to be able to maintain a more nearly regular publishing
schedule, God willing.

$$(E_x)(E_y) F(x,y) \rightarrow (E_a)(\chi)(F(a,a) \neq \sim F(a,x))$$

JOSEPH BYRD: November Dragon

(a sound-poem for two speaker-singers, each to perform independently of the other)

Instructions: The performers should be in the same room, or, if performed outdoors, within hearing distance of each other. Each performer reads his part from the sheets provided, producing as best he can the sounds called for. Within the boundaries given, the performers may use as much or as little ingenuity or imagination as they wish in the realization of the parts, although dramatic actions which do not contribute directly to the sound are to be avoided.

Explanation of Notation: The notation is constructed around a series of vertical lines, the distance between any two being a single unit of time. This unit of time may be from one to two seconds in length, but once chosen should remain fixed throughout the performance.

Within this framework of established duration, the following three types of notation appear:

1. numbers refer to the intensity (1-6 equals soft to very loud) at which each sound is to begin; after the initial dynamic has been produced, the performer is free to use any dynamics of his choosing throughout the remaining duration of that particular sound.
2. letters attempt to show the sort of sound wanted, by phonetic spelling where voiced sounds are needed, simple consonants where sounds are to be produced by an exhalation of breath without audible pitch (thus "sh," "k," etc.), ("ch" is the German "ch," made at the back of the mouth.)
3. heavy horizontal black lines show both the duration of the sounds and their relative pitch. Sound-length is determined by the length of the heavy black lines, pitch by their position relative to the continuous thin horizontal line (which represents a midiant pitch).

Performance: The two performers should start within five seconds of each other. How they finish relative to each other is mainly a factor of the tempo each performer chooses. This poem is not and is not to be expected to sound the same each time it is performed. The random elements involved are an integral part of the composition.

November, 1880.

by
Joseph Beard

Part A

November Dragons

Joseph ¹⁸ Boyd

Part B

BEATITUDE / east
number 17, February 6, 1961

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There are now, by subtle agreements, at least two kinds of Beatitude, east and west. This is going some. Hardly Christ could manage so many. But then, he preceded offset lithography by many years, and thus lacked some of our conveniences.

Beatitude/east (that's this one) is now (at finally) published by Beatitude Press, Inc., located at 78 East 10th Street, New York 3, New York. All manuscripts, subscriptions (4 issues for \$2.00), &c., should be sent to that address.

Beginning with the next issue (April), Beatitude/east will publish prose and advertisements, as well as poetry, and will expand properly to accomodate the new material. Advertising rates on request.

Our last-issue plea for an IBM typewriter was answered by a saintly gentleman who wishes to remain anonymous.

The two major New York havens for poetry now seem to be WBAI, on which Dave Ossman conducts a poetry program at 10:30 p.m. alternate Tuesdays (Feb. 14, 28, Mar. 14, 28, 4, 5 inc., fm), and the Tenth Street Coffee Shop, immediately downstairs from the office of this magazine, where they are group (open) poetry readings every Wednesday night at 8:30 and solo readings every Sunday afternoon at 3:30, and a good library of poetry for between times.

Beatitude/east is edited by C. V. J. Anderson.